

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 EA-10 FRB-03 INR-10 NEA-11 NSAE-00 ICA-11
OPIC-03 SP-02 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00
OMB-01 SS-15 DODE-00 H-01 INT-05 L-03 NSC-05
PA-01 CTME-00 STR-07 ITC-01 SOE-02 DOE-15 /151 W
-----012786 211925Z /72

R 211639Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7421
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
USMISSION GENEVA

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USEEC

PASS AGRICULTURE ELECTRONICALLY
PARIS ALSO FOR USOECD
GENEVA ALSO FOR USMTN

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, EEC
SUBJ: EC COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS - REVIEW OF
MTN AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

1. COMMISSIONER GUNDELACH BRIEFLY OUTLINED THE STATE OF
MTN NEGOTIATIONS CONCERNING AGRICULTURE DURING THE TUESDAY
MORNING SESSION OF THE JUNE 19-20 MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
OF AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY A BRIEF
AIRING OF MEMBER STATE CONCERNS BY THE VARIOUS
AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS.

2. IN HIS PRESENTATION, GUNDELACH EMPHASIZED THE FACT
THAT THE COMMUNITY WAS THE LARGEST TRADING ENTITY IN THE
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MTN'S AND AS SUCH SHOULD NOT BE INHIBITED IN ITS APPROACH
TO SEEKING A POSITIVE OUTCOME IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.
GUNDELACH INDICATED THAT WHILE HE COULD NOT BE VERY PRECISE
IN HIS STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE COMMUNITY'S NEGOTIATING
POSITION (SINCE EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS TO
BE RELATIVELY PUBLIC INFORMATION), HE COULD ASSURE THE
AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS THAT THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF

THE COMMUNITY'S COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY WOULD NOT BE COMPROMISED. HE AGAIN POINTED OUT THAT THE COMMISSION NEEDS MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY IN ITS NEGOTIATING APPROACH IN ORDER TO EXTRACT THE MAXIMUM BENEFITS FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS. HE STRESSED THAT THE COMMUNITY WOULD CONTINUE TO SEEK A BALANCED OUTCOME FOR AGRICULTURE; WHERE THE COMMUNITY WAS ASKED TO MAKE CONCESSIONS, IT WOULD EXPECT TO SEE BALANCING CONCESSIONS MADE BY OTHER COUNTRIES IN AGRICULTURE. IN REVIEWING VARIOUS PRODUCTS, GUNDELACH AGAIN MADE THE POINT THAT FEEDGRAINS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE OVERALL FRAMEWORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHEAT AGREEMENT. FOR DAIRY PRODUCTS, GUNDELACH POINTED TO THE NEED TO REACH AN OVERALL MTN AGREEMENT THAT WOULD IMPROVE EC ACCESS TO THIRD COUNTRY MARKETS (PARTICULARLY THE U.S.) WHILE PERMITTING THE USE OF LIMITED EXPORT SUBSIDIES. IN THIS CONTEXT, GUNDELACH REFERRED TO THE NEW ZEALAND REQUEST THAT THE COMMUNITY IMPORT 15,000 METRIC TONS OF NEW ZEALAND CHEDDAR. HE SAID THAT FAVORABLE EC CONSIDERATION OF THIS REQUEST WOULD BE CONTINGENT ON THE ABILITY OF THE COMMUNITY TO SECURE ARRANGEMENTS TO EXPORT AN APPROXIMATELY EQUIVALENT AMOUNT OF SPECIALTY CHEESES TO NORTH AMERICA. THE IRISH VOICED GRAVE CONCERN THAT ANY INCREASE IN IMPORTS WOULD OVERBURDEN AN ALREADY DIFFICULT MARKET SITUATION. THE U.K. ATTEMPTED TO ALLAY IRISH CONCERNS BY POINTING OUT THAT THE PROSPECTIVE 15,000 TONS OF NEW ZEALAND IMPORTS WOULD MAKE UP ONLY A VERY SMALL PART OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE 220,000 METRIC TON U.K. MARKET. GUNDELACH RESPONDED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE IRISH TO KEEP THE OVERALL PACKAGE IN MIND, BUT THAT NO DECISIONS WOULD BE TAKEN IN THIS AREA UNTIL THE COMMUNITY HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE WHAT THE FINAL RESULT WOULD BE.

3. IN THE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS FOLLOWING THE SPEECH, ITALY EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN THAT TOO MANY CONCESSIONS HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE ON PRODUCTS OF INTEREST TO ITALY IN PAST NEGOTIATIONS AND AGAIN EMPHASIZED THAT NO FURTHER CONCESSIONS FOR PRODUCTS RELATED TO MEDITERRANEAN AGRICULTURE SHOULD BE CONTEMPLATED, CITING PARTICULARLY CITRUS AND TOBACCO AS PRODUCTS WHERE THE COMMUNITY SHOULD MAKE A FIRM STAND. THE U.K. MINISTER ALSO QUESTIONED GUNDELACH CONCERNING THE COMMISSION'S STAND ON THE WINE GALLON/PROOF GALLON METHOD OF TAX ASSESSMENT MAINTAINED BY THE UNITED STATES. GUNDELACH ASSURED THE U.K. MINISTER THAT THIS WAS INDEED ONE OF THE PRIORITY ITEMS ON THE COMMUNITY'S NEGOTIATING AGENDA. A NUMBER OF RDELEGATIONS ALSO EXPRESSED THEIR DISMAY CONCERNING THE LACK OF PROGRESS IN OBTAINING MEANINGFUL AGRICULTURAL CONCESSIONS FROM JAPAN. MORRIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGRICULTURE, COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BRUSSE12261
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780259-0354
Format: TEL
From: BRUSSELS USEEC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780637/aaaabfwk.tel
Line Count: 116
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9594b784-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2271115
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EC COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS - REVIEW OF MTN AGRICULTURAL ISSUES
TAGS: EAGR, EEC
To: STATE USOECD MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9594b784-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014